Hamilton Field, Warehouse Type A
(Facility No. 410, Supply/Equipment Warehouse)
2nd Street and Hangar Avenue
Novato
Marin County
California

HABS No. CA-2398-P

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California

HABS
CAL
21-NOVA,
1P-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HAMILTON FIELD
Warehouse Type A
(Supply/Equipment Warehouse, Facility No. 410)

HABS No. CA-2398-P

Location: Hamilton Army Air Field
Novato, Marin County, California
Warehouse Type A
Facility No. 410 (2nd Street and Hangar Avenue)

U.S.G.S.: Novato, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1954 (revised 1980)
Petaluma Point, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1959 (revised 1980)
UTM Coordinates: Zone 10; A: 542100/4213620; B: 544720/4212220;
C: 542760/4210650; D: 541040/4212600

Present Owner: General Services Administration, Washington, D.C.

Present Occupant: General Services Administration

Present Use: Limited temporary storage facility

Statement of Significance:

Facility No. 410 was the first industrial building to be completed on the base and was used by the Air Corps. This warehouse served as the Air Corps storehouse and distribution center from base inception through World War II. Later it was used as a supply and equipment warehouse. This building is an example of the application of an important architectural trend (Spanish Colonial Revival) adapted to reflect California's Mission heritage in a departure from traditional military architecture.

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) for a comprehensive Statement of Significance and individual report HABS No. CA-2398-F for a condensed general Statement of Significance.

PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: Construction on the Air Corps warehouse was completed on July 31, 1933 (Hamilton Facility Cards 1933-1971).

2. Architect: Hamilton Field was designed under the guidance of Captain Howard B. Nurse, Construction Quartermaster. He was assisted by a corps of civilians headed by H. P. Spencer, Chief Architect, and F. W. Salfinger, Chief Engineer. Captain F. C. Petes and Lieutenant J. H. Veal of the Quartermaster's Corps were detailed to Marin County by the War Department to assist Nurse (*Novato Advance* May 28, 1932). Landscaping efforts were directed by C. C. Stevens, a local landscape engineer, using plantings chosen by Nurse and donated by Marin County citizens.

3. Original Owner: Hamilton Field is on land originally owned by private individuals and companies. In 1930, the California Packing Company sold 630 acres of land to Marin County to use to entice the Army to build on the site. An additional 161 acres were purchased from Dr. T. Peter and Julia Bodkin. These parcels were combined with other County-owned land, and in 1932 Marin County sold a 927-acre parcel of land to the Department of the Army for $1.00 for use by the Army Air Corps as an air field. In 1947 Hamilton Air Field was transferred to the newly-formed U. S. Air Force and renamed Hamilton Air Force Base. In 1974 the U. S. Congress declared the installation excess to military needs and closed the base (Maniery et al. 1993). The warehouse was transferred to General Services Administration in 1974 and was sold to private developers as excess property in 1996.

4. Builder, Contractor, Supplier: Although the builder is unknown, it was likely built by Robert E. McKee Company of Los Angeles. It was completed at a cost of $93,172.69.

5. Original Plans and Construction: Copies of Nurse's original plans for this building are filed at the National Archives, Pacific Division, San Bruno, CA. and the Hamilton Room, Novato History Museum, Novato. The original ink on vellum drawings were not located. Pencil on tracing paper drawing of the 1942 additions are also at the National Archives.

6. Alterations/Additions: The building was modified in 1960 by the conversion of a portion of the downstairs to a lobby and offices. The mezzanine was expanded at this time and the original door lift mechanism on the southeast facade was removed. Duct work was also modified. This alteration of the mezzanine resulted in replacement of

windows on the southeast primary facade and concrete openings. In 1964 acoustical tile suspended ceilings were installed to the first floor rooms. Fire alarms were added in 1966. In 1970 walls were repaired with steel expansion plates. Cracks and joints were caulked and the entire exterior surface was stuccoed and painted. In 1971 the double overhead doors in the side bays were replaced.

B. Historical Context:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) and Section B in report HABS No. CA-2398-F.

This warehouse was one of the first permanent buildings constructed on base, with a completion date of July 31, 1933 (Hamilton Facility Cards 1933-1971). It is the largest warehouse facility on the base.

PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: Nurse and his team of architects designed reinforced concrete buildings covered with white stucco and red tile roofs and other features such as arcades and ornamental door surrounds in a basic Spanish Colonial Revival style. This style was used by Captain Nurse at Randolph Field in Texas and by other Army architects at various bases (Fine and Remington 1972:48; Thomason and Associates 1993). Captain Nurse blended the standard Colonial Revival design with elements borrowed from Moorish, Spanish Churriguerresque, Mission, and Art Moderne styles, creating a unique Spanish Eclectic look. Art Moderne elements, including corner pillars, incised designs, and stepped parapets appear on many of the base buildings, mostly in the industrial sector in warehouses, maintenance shops, and hangars.

2. Condition of fabric: The warehouse has deteriorated substantially since it was vacated. Portions of the roof are missing and water damage in the mezzanine area is extensive and floors are rotted. The structural system appears sound, and the exterior fabric is in fair condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Warehouse Type A is one and one-half stories high and rectangular in shape. It measures 200 feet by 111 feet and, with approximately 22,000 square feet on the first floor, is the largest warehouse on the base. The front elevation consists of central double doors flanked by multi-pane steel industrial sash windows beneath a front gable roof with central circular louvre. Concrete pillars anchor the

corners and pilasters surround the doorway. Protruding cast concrete window sills provide a horizontal band across the facade.

2. Foundation: The foundation is composite piles with reinforced concrete beams.

3. Walls: The exterior walls consist of 12-inch hollow tile blocks coated with cementitious stucco rendered with a smooth face. Walls on the southeast and southwest elevations were repaired and reinforced in 1970 with steel expansion plates secured to the concrete window sills. Exterior detailing consists of square cast concrete pillars at each corner of the building and pilasters flanking the central entrances on the northeast and southwest elevations. The corner pillars have recessed vertical panels on each side and stepped caps. The pilasters are stepped in an Art Moderne style. Circular louvers pierce the front and rear facades beneath the peak of the gables.

4. Structural systems, framing: The building is supported by 12-inch thick reinforced concrete columns, infilled with load-bearing poured-in-place reinforced concrete. The roof is supported by riveted steel trusses.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: The rear and front facade access is reached by concrete stoops. Concrete stairways, with two-inch diameter pipe railings, are located on either side of the stoop. A loading dock, supported by square concrete piers, is located along the northwest elevation and has a ramp on one end. Tracks ran parallel to this dock and ended at a bumper guard. The southwest portion is covered with a shed-roofed canopy. A new concrete stairway was constructed in 1960 to provide access to the southwest entry.

6. Chimneys: Two 16-inch diameter metal ventilators are located on the roof and are original. Additional ventilators and hooded duct exhausts also protrude from the roof.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways/doors: Doors on the northeast elevation are double solid-core wood with multiple recessed panels. Replacement doors on the southwest elevation are plywood with a central personnel door. Two industrial wood overhead doors provide access to the northwest side from the raised loading dock. All doors were installed in 1971.

b. Windows/shutters: Metal industrial multi-light sash windows flank the original doors on the northeast elevation; those on the southwest elevation have been partially blocked with masonry construction and smaller aluminum frame windows, all installed in 1965. Metal industrial multi-pane sash windows continue

along both side elevations, separated by the two access doors on the northwest side. The original windows have 12- to 24-light metal frames. The top and bottom row of lights are fixed with the center six to eight lights forming an operable awning window. There are six sets of double windows on each side of the northeast entry. The windows on the side elevations are doubled, except for over the access doors where they are single.

8. Roof:

a. Shape/covering: The roof is front-gabled, low-pitched, and covered with composition shingles laid over wood stringers. It has copper gutters and downspouts.

b. Cornice/eaves: There is a row of mission tiles along the top of the front and rear gables, which are raised above the composition roof. There is a copper cornice.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

a. First Floor: The building is accessed by double doors on three sides, and a loading platform on the fourth side. Most of the building is an open storage space. Originally one corner was enclosed for storage space, including a cold storage. Another corner has been enclosed for an office, an office file room, a stock room, and two bathrooms. The enclosed offices were expanded and divided in 1960. The south side is separated into a series of office rooms, surrounding a central lobby.

c. Second Floor: Originally the building had a small mezzanine area in the southeast corner that contained offices and a bathroom. This area was expanded across the length of the building in 1960 and now measures 676.5 feet by 46 feet. It contains a large, open room with 3/4 height partitions to separate work areas and a series of offices off a corridor in the original section of the mezzanine area.

2. Stairways: Originally, stairways accessed areas above the old cold storage room and over the stockroom and office tile room. The cold storage stairs were wood. The mezzanine was accessed by stairs with concrete treads and no risers that had two-inch pipe handrail. Stairs added in 1960 to access the expanded mezzanine from the lobby have pre-cast concrete treads and one-inch square steel balustrades with a maple handrail. This staircase replaced the wooden stairs and is supported by two three-inch diameter metal posts.

3. Flooring: Floors in the main warehouse are reinforced concrete slab. The mezzanine extension is supported by metal floor joists. The subfloor in this area is plywood. The subfloor is covered with eight-inch square green asphalt tiles. Flooring on the first floor office area is also asphalt tile squares over the concrete slab floor. Latrines have the same green asphalt tile flooring.

4. Wall/ceiling finish: Interior walls are wood-framed with 1/2-inch gypsum board facing. The ceilings in the mezzanine and lower office are suspended with acoustical tiles installed in 1964.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways/doors: Original interior doors were solid core with flush panels under four-light fixed glass. A few of these are present in the original mezzanine. Other interior doors are hollow core with three recessed panels.

b. Windows: The interior warehouse space receives natural light from the banks of windows. The mezzanine hall originally was partially lighted through the glass and wood paneled interior doors.

6. Decorative features/trim: Metal storage racks are present in the warehouse. Built-in wood storage cabinets are located in one office in the mezzanine level. A steel I-beam track extends across the width of the warehouse ceiling.

7. Hardware: Interior door hardware consists of standard metal circular knobs with half mortise door hinges. The original brass switch plates are extant in the mezzanine.

8. Mechanical equipment: A "Westinghouse" freon condenser No. CWC-12A is located in the main warehouse suspended from the trusses.

a. Heating: Original heating consisted of gas-fired unit heaters mounted on the ceiling and gas steam radiators made by the American Radiator Company. Two MABS winter air conditioning forced air gas furnaces were added in 1960, along with a duct system.

b. Ventilation: Ventilation consists of circular louvers in the gable ends of the upper story, roof ventilators, squirrel cage fans, and a swamp cooler mounted in a window on the side elevation. Exposed ducts are present in the offices and mezzanine area.

c. Lighting: The mezzanine was wired through conduits leading to a 220-volt panel. The panel is a "Junior Vacu-break Safety Switch" with "Clampmatic Contacts" (Catalog No. JN-424). It was made by Bulldog Electric Products,

Detroit. Original fixtures in the mezzanine are ceiling-mounted single light bulbs with decorative metal covers. Lighting in the remainder of the mezzanine level and the lower office area is provided by ceiling-mounted, shallow, two-tube fluorescent fixtures covered with four plastic diffusing panels.

d. Plumbing: The original mezzanine contains 1930s fire suppression sprinkler system with metal canopy-mounted sprinklers covered with wire cages. The original latrines contain one "Standard" urinal original to the building and two unmarked urinals added in 1943, two "Standard" flush valve toilets, two wall-mounted sinks, one mop sink, and two mounted mirrors. The latrine added in 1960 to the lower level has two stalls, each with a "Crane" flush-valve toilet and one "Crane" sink. Two "HAWS" drinking fountains were installed in 1943. These were removed in 1960 and replaced with one "SUNROC" fountain.

D. Site:

1. General site orientation: The primary facade of Building 410 faces southwest, towards an unnamed street. The rear facade, of the same design, faces northeast towards Hangar Avenue. It is located in the original Spanish Colonial Revival district of Hamilton Army Air Field on a flat site that is surrounded by rolling hills, fitting within a grid system that is adjacent to the flight field.

2. Historic landscape design: The majority of buildings in the administration area have some landscaping, particularly around the NCO barracks. Street trees, such as Modesto ash, camphor, and various palms, are present throughout this area. Building corner and doorways are delimited by a number of conifers, the most prominent being sawara false cypress and Italian cypress. Accent trees include coast redwood and some red ironbark, which were incorporated into divider triangles and sometimes near entrances. California and Mexican fan palms and golden bamboo were prominent framers of entrances, as was the New Zealand draceaena. Foundation plantings are quite diverse and include mock orange, flowering quince, Portugal laurel, and Manukka tea tree. Japanese privet, Hollywood juniper, and heavenly bamboo appear to have been added subsequent to the late 1930s and were not part of the original landscape design on base.

The Warehouse is located in the original Quartermaster's area of the air field, within a complex of warehouses, industrial buildings, and asphalt parking lots. Threshold palm trees are located on the southwest elevation of the building and were used as corner accents. Pampas grass is growing around the foundation. A concrete retaining wall is located on the northeast border of its surrounding lot, which is elevated above Hangar Avenue.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural Drawings:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398). Copies of the original plans for this warehouse are on file at the National Archives, Pacific Division, San Bruno, CA. and the Hamilton Room, Novato History Museum, Novato.

B. Historic Maps and Views:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398).

C. Interviews:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398).

D. Bibliography:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398).

Sources cited in this individual report are listed below.

Fine, Jesse, and Lenore Remington
1972 *Army Corps of Engineers: Construction in the U.S.* U.S. Army and World War II, Office of Military History.

Hamilton Facility Cards
1933-1971 Maintenance Cards for Base Facilities. On file, Hamilton Army Air Field Installation Office, Novato, and Hamilton Room, Novato History Museum, Novato.

Maniery, Mary L., Leslie R. Fryman, and Fred Hrusa
1993 *National Register of Historic Places Evaluation, Hamilton Army Air Field Historic District, Marin County, California*. Submitted to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District.

Thomason and Associates
1993 *Randolph Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas*. Cultural Resource Survey, Final Report. Nashville, Tennessee. On file, State Office of Historic Preservation, Austin, Texas.

E. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398).

F. Supplemental Material:

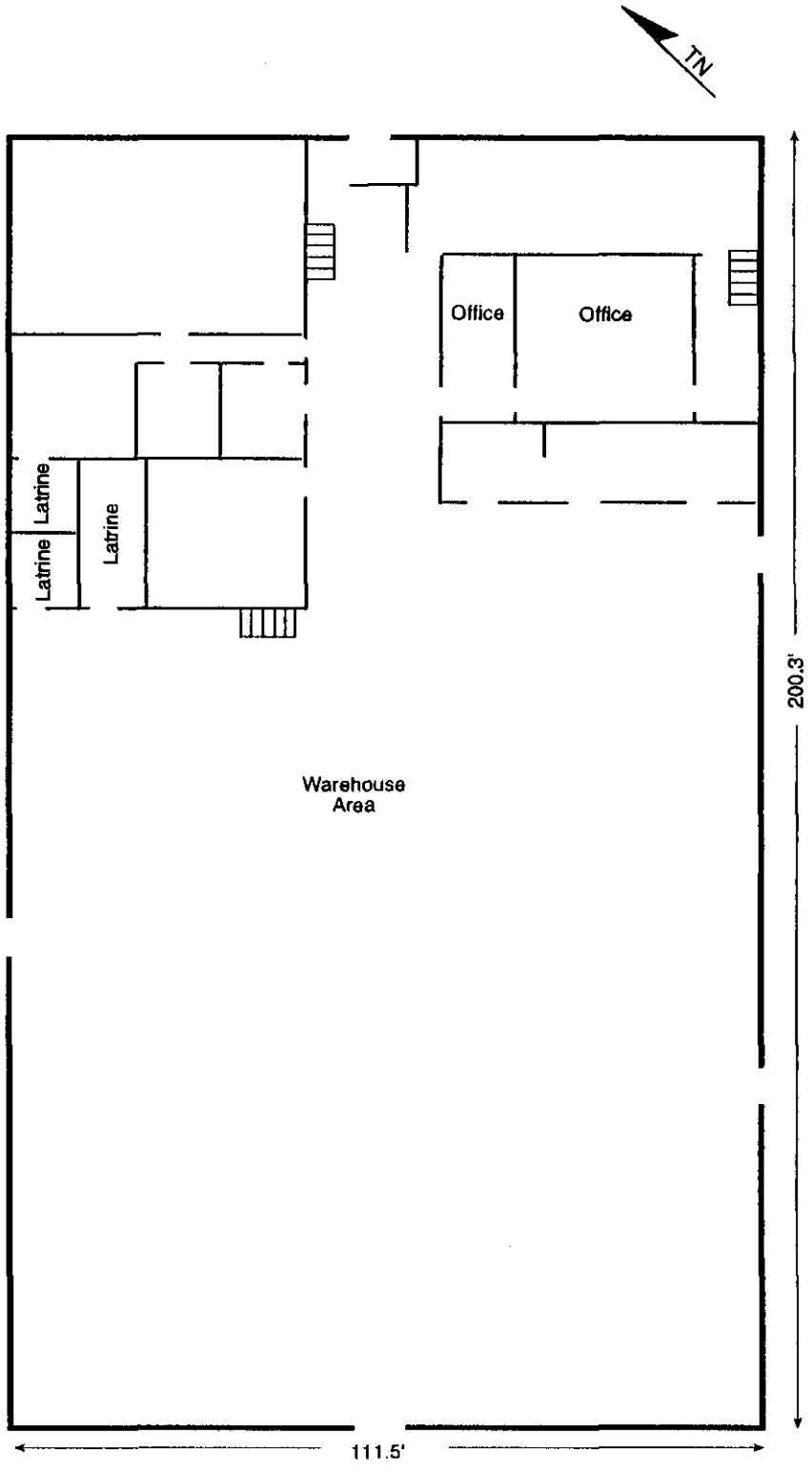
Copies of representative floor plans of Facility No. 410, dated in the 1930s and prepared by the Quartermaster's General Office are attached to this form. The line drawn sketches were drafted on site in 1994 by Keith Syda, scanned into a computer end drawn by Christopher MacDonald in 1995, and corrected and finalized by Claire Warshaw in 1996 (all PAR Environmental Services, Inc. staff).

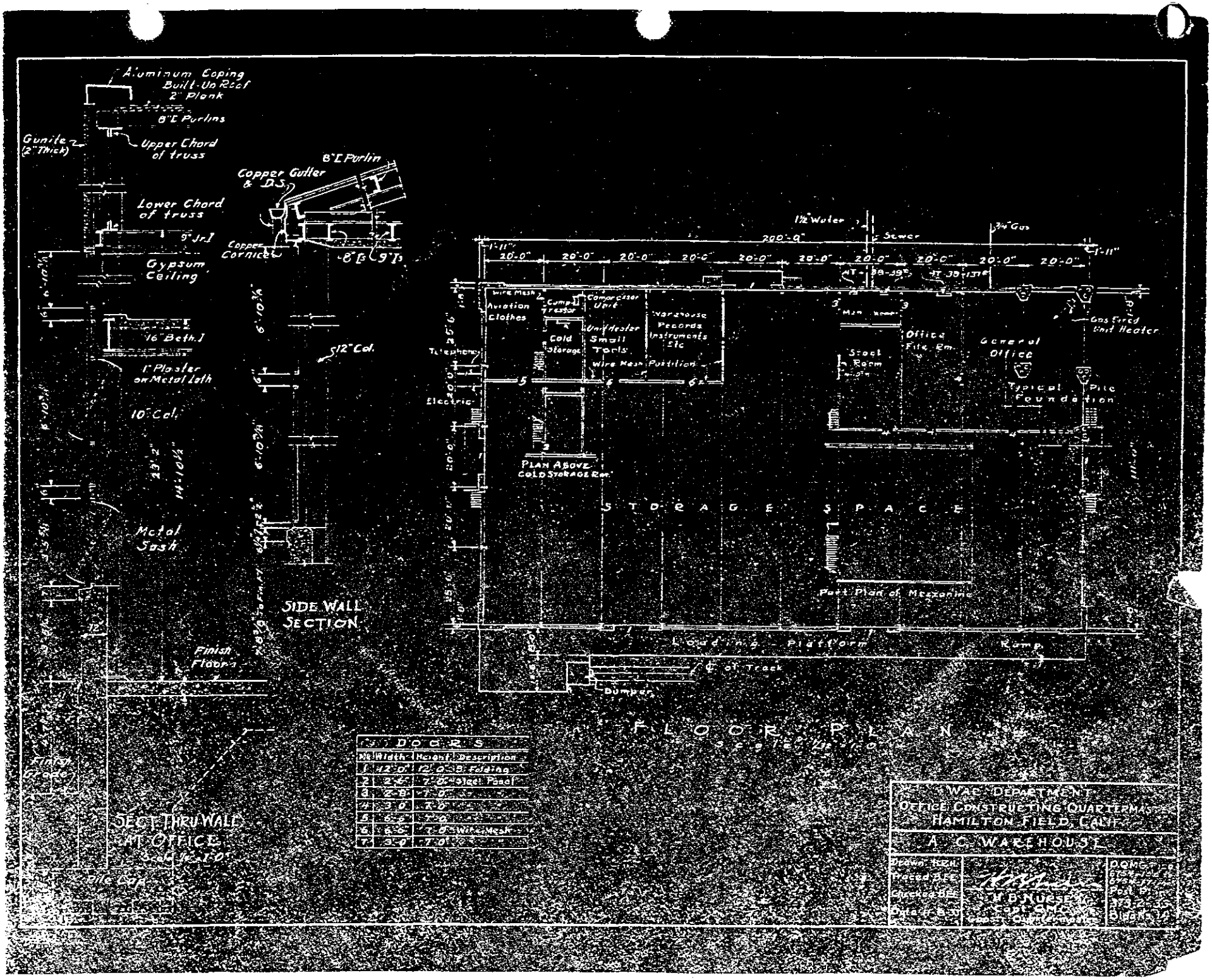
PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Hamilton Army Air Field is owned by various federal entities including the Department of the Navy, Department of the Army, United States Coast Guard, and General Services Administration. The Army/GSA parcels are being excessed and sold to private developers. The Navy property is included in Base Closure and Realignment actions.

As part of the Army's undertaking, it has been determined in consultation with the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) that the excess sale will have an affect on properties at the air field, and that these properties are components of a district that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Based on consultation with the OHP and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, pursuant to 36 CFR part 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f), a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was entered into by the interested parties in March 1994. The agreement stipulated that prior to excess sale the Army must contact the HABS/HAER division at the Western Regional Office of the National Park Service, San Francisco, California, to determine the appropriate level and kind of recordation for the subject properties. The MOA further stipulated that copies of the documentation be made available to the OHP and appropriate local archives designated by the OHP. This recordation has been prepared in order to meet those stipulations.

The title page, Part I, and Part III were prepared by Mary L. Maniery, Historian, PAR Environmental Services, Sacramento. Architectural descriptions in Part II were compiled by Judith Marvin, Historian/Architectural Historian, Foothill Resources, Murphys, California. Descriptions were checked against photographs and plans by Mary L. Maniery and were embellished and corrected, as necessary. Information on historic landscape design was extracted by Mary L. Maniery from a report prepared by Dr. Fred Hrusa, Botanist, PAR Environmental Services. Photography was prepared by David DeVries, Mesa Technical, Berkeley, California.


TN
Office
Office
Latrine
Latrine
Latrine
Warehouse
Area
200.3'
111.5'


Aluminum Coping
Built-Up Roof
2" Plank
8"I Purlins
Gunite (2" Thick)
Upper Chord of truss
8"I Purlin
Copper Gutter & D.S.
Lower Chord of truss
9" Jr.I
Copper Cornice
8"B 9"I
Gypsum Ceiling
16" Beth.I
1" Plaster on Metal lath
10" Col.
Metal Sash
5'2" Col.
SIDE WALL SECTION
Finish Floors
SECT. THRU WALL AT OFFICE
1½" Water
Sewer
3/4" Gas
200'-0"
20'-0"
Wire Mesh
Aviation Clothes
Compressor Unit
Cold Storage
Workbench Small Tools
Warehouse Records Instruments Etc
Wire Mesh Partition
Office File Rm.
General Office
Stock Room
Gas Fired Unit Heater
Typical Foundation
Pile
Telephone
Electric
PLAN ABOVE COLD STORAGE RM.
STORAGE SPACE
Post
Plan of Mezzanine
Loading Platform
Ramp
℄ of Track
Dumper
FLOOR PLAN
DOORS
No. Width Height Description
1 12'-0" 12'-0" Folding
2 2'-6" 7'-0" Steel Panel
3 2'-8" 7'-0"
4 3'-0" 7'-0"
5 6'-0" 7'-0"
6 6'-0" 7'-0" With Mesh
7 3'-0" 7'-0"
WAC DEPARTMENT
OFFICE CONSTRUCTING QUARTERMASTER
HAMILTON FIELD, CALIF.
A.C. WAREHOUSE